Two Noteworthy Sculptures from Sannati

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ಸನ್ನತಿಯ ಎರಡು ಗಮನಾರ್ಹ ಶಿಲ್ಪಗಳು - Two Noteworthy Sculptures from Sannati

Summary:
Sannati is an ancient Buddhist site. Its rediscovery by S. Nagaraju in 1964, by locating Buddhist sculptures, panels, inscriptions, casket as well as extensive brick fortified early historical habitation sife that had been noticed earlier by Kapatral Krishna Rao is notable. Some articles dealing with important sculptural remains and inscriptions from Sannati have been published by Sheshadri. Of the sculptural remains from this site exhibited in the Government Museum, Gulbarga, two sculptures attracted my attention. One is the stomach and waist part of a colossal Yaksha and the other is a (or ***darnpati)*** in fragment, a rare form, both in the round. The two sculptures though in small fragments in subject and form are distinct. Actually the sculptural piece is of a colossal statue obviously of Yaksha. Only the stomach and waist part of it is extant. - The front part of the stomach also is mutilated. The part above the chest and the part below the mid thigh are missing. However the extant part evidently indicates the figure in standing posture. The left hand is placed on the waist. The figure wears "dhotra" with ***katibandha*** hanging loop on the sides. The ***katibandha*** forms a frame to the overhanging pot belly. The obesity is strikingly prominent. The hand is heavy. The figures are stout and the nails are. distinct. The ***dhotra*** is in indistinctive vertical folds in the front.

The ***mithuna*** sculpture is apparently a donor couple in a stand at ease posture. But the part representing the lady and the part above the neck, the left shoulder, the right hand and the part below the knee of the noble man are missing. However the original total form of the sculpture can be discerned from the available part. The noble man spreads his right arm from behind over his consort's right shoulder. The lady delicately places her left hand with a pair of jewelled bangles on the back of her husband. The man's chest is bare. He ***dhotra*** and ***kati-vastra*** in folds let loose in ***malukara*** in the front and in long loops on the sides. The vertical depression with spinal chord indicating a healthy strong body, flat stomach with the round and deep naval and play of the parts of the body especially the buttocks owing to the standing posture as well as the subdued details of the dress bring out the human form in a soft natural beauty. Both sculptures are stylistically of the 2nd century A.D.

Previously the author has noticed a colossal Yaksha in round relief at Haigunda (U.K. dist.). Earlier from Sannati too, two or three Yaksha sculptures are reported. But these are Kubja

Yakshas performing attendants jobs of carrying lamp on the head etc. The present notice of the normal colossal Yaksha sculpture in Sannati is unlike the Kubja Yaksha form but is that from Haigunda meant for periodical worship. It appears therefore that there was considerable popularity of the Yaksha cult during the beginning of the Christian era in this part of Karnataka. While the Yaksha sculpture from Haigunda belongs to Western-Deccan School of Sculptural Art, as for example at Karle, those from Sannati are more in the late Amaravati, sculptural style. The ***mithuna*** sculpture from Sannati therefore appears to be significant. Does **it** represent some divinity (such as Maheshvara) and cultic in purpose ?